Leading to Connect to the Larger Community or World: expanding the world of the classroom beyond the school

May include: Engaging business and industry with the school or district in authentic ways; connecting teachers with broader world including fundraising, outreach, and collaboration with other groups; bringing community resources into the classroom

Vignette:

DaJea teaches in a large urban district in a city engaged in recommiting to developing a competitive and well-educated workforce. To date, the school district has played a small role in city-wide improvement efforts, and DaJea and her colleagues feel that both their school and district are missing an opportunity to contribute to city advancement. In a bold move, she and teachers on her grade-level team email the mayor's office and ask if their school can become a case study for community engagement. They hope to show how community resources can broaden school efforts to prepare students for secondary school, and in turn, how students can design and implement projects that add value to the city. The mayor is intrigued and puts DaJea and colleagues in touch with a cultural arts group that is actively involved in the city's effort to make the arts more visible and enhance the image of the city. What emerges is a project for creating an arts walking tour of existing outdoor art, to which the students will add their own sculptures and murals. Local artists have joined students in DaJea's classroom, making art together and giving her students a window into the process of creating products that have both beauty and purpose.

Core Beliefs:
o   Teachers, students and their schools are part of a larger community infrastructure, making collaboration beneficial and necessary.
o   An educated citizenry will preserve our democracy, giving everyone in the community a stake in successful schools.
o   There is value in working with stakeholders beyond the school, including families and community groups.
o   The larger community brings additional talent and resources into the school that can enhance student learning.
o   Technology can span distance and connect students and teachers to a larger world.

Dispositions:
o   Being open to working with those outside the field of education to achieve common purposes.
o   Appreciate diverse views and experiences.
o   Able to compromise.
o   Willing to admit own limitations and learn from others.
o   Recognize patterns and trends.
o   Inspire others to support and improve education.

Knowledge and Skills:
o   Able to make connections between the work of the school and goals of the community.
o   Understand how to work in structures and contexts outside of education.
o   Seek resources, information and corporate investment beyond the school.
o   Craft and deliver an effective message.
o   Work with community stakeholders to garner support.
o   Use data effectively to inform goal setting, monitoring and reporting of progress.
o   Use technology to connect students with those geographically distant.